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Eradication of poverty and other development issues: women in development

Draft resolution submitted by the Vice-Chairperson of the Committee, Mr. Dragan Mićić (Serbia), on the basis of informal consultations on draft resolution A/C.2/64/L.44

Women in development

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 52/195 of 18 December 1997, 54/210 of 22 December 1999, 56/188 of 21 December 2001, 58/206 of 23 December 2003, 59/248 of 22 December 2004, 60/210 of 22 December 2005, 62/206 of 19 December 2007 and all its other resolutions on the integration of women in development, and the relevant resolutions and agreed conclusions adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women, including the Declaration adopted at its forty-ninth session,[1]

Reaffirming the Beijing Declaration[2] and Platform for Action[3] and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century",[4]

Reaffirming also the commitments to gender equality and the advancement of women made at the Millennium Summit,[5] the 2005 World Summit[6] and other major United Nations summits, conferences and special sessions, and reaffirming also that their full, effective and accelerated implementation are integral to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals,

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[1] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2005, Supplement No. 7* and corrigendum (E/2005/27 and Corr.1), chap. I, sect. A.

[2] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[3] Ibid., annex II.

[4] Resolution S-23/2, annex, and resolution S-23/3, annex.

[5] See resolution 55/2.

[6] See resolution 60/1.

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Reaffirming further the United Nations Millennium Declaration, which affirms that the equal rights and opportunities of women and men must be assured, and calls, inter alia, for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women as being effective and essential to eradicating poverty and hunger, in combating diseases and in stimulating development that is truly sustainable,

Recalling the outcomes of the International Conference on Financing for Development,[7] the World Summit on Sustainable Development,[8] the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development[9] and the Outcome of the Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and Its impact on Development,[10]

Taking note with appreciation of the discussion on women in development in the Commission on the Status of Women at its fiftieth session, and recalling its agreed conclusions on "Enhanced participation of women in development: an enabling environment for achieving gender equality and the advancement of women, taking into account, inter alia, the fields of education, health and work",[11]

Recognizing that access to basic affordable health care, preventive health information and the highest standard of health, including in the areas of sexual and reproductive health, is critical to women's economic advancement, that lack of economic empowerment and independence increases women's vulnerability to a range of negative consequences, including the risk of contracting HIV/AIDS, and that the neglect of the full enjoyment of human rights by women severely limits their opportunities in public and private life, including the opportunity for education and economic and political empowerment,

Reaffirming that gender equality is of fundamental importance for achieving sustained and inclusive economic growth, poverty eradication and sustainable development, in accordance with the relevant General Assembly resolutions and United Nations conferences, and that investing in the development of women and girls has a multiplier effect, in particular on productivity, efficiency and sustained and inclusive economic growth, in all sectors of the economy, especially in key areas such as agriculture, industry and services,

Reaffirming also the significant contribution that women make to the economy, that women are key contributors to the economy and to combating poverty and inequalities through both remunerated and unremunerated work at home, in the community and in the workplace and that the empowerment of women is a critical factor in the eradication of poverty,

Recognizing that the difficult socio-economic conditions that exist in many developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, have contributed to the feminization of poverty,

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[7] *Report of the International Conference on Financing for Development, Monterrey, Mexico, 18-22 March 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.02.II.A.7), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[8] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

[9] Resolution 63/239, annex.

[10] Resolution 63/303, annex.

[11] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2006, Supplement No. 7* and corrigenda (E/2006/27 and Corr.1 and 2), chap I, sect. D.

Expressing deep concern over the disproportionate negative impact on women of the multiple interrelated and mutually exacerbating current global crises, in particular the world financial and economic crisis, the volatile energy prices, the food crisis and the challenges posed by climate change,

Noting that gender biases in labour markets and women's lack of control over their own labour and earned income are also major factors in women's vulnerability to poverty, and, together with women's disproportionate responsibilities for domestic work, result in a lack of economic autonomy and influence in economic decision-making within households and in society at all levels,

Recognizing that population and development issues, education and training, health, nutrition, the environment, water supply, sanitation, housing, communications, science and technology and decent employment opportunities are important elements for effective poverty eradication and the advancement and empowerment of women,

Welcoming its resolution 63/311 of 14 September 2009, in particular the provisions on strengthening the institutional arrangements for support of gender equality and the empowerment of women, reaffirming its strong support expressed therein for the consolidation of the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, the Division for the Advancement of Women, the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women into a composite entity, taking into account the existing mandates, to be led by an Under-Secretary-General, and looking forward to the full implementation of resolution 63/311,

Recognizing, in this context, the importance of respect for all human rights, including the right to development, and of a national and international environment that promotes, inter alia, justice, gender equality, equity, civil and political participation and civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights and fundamental freedoms for the advancement and empowerment of women,

Reaffirming the need to eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by the earliest possible date and at all levels by 2015, and reaffirming that equal access to education and training at all levels, in particular in business, trade, administration, information and communications technology and other new technologies and the need to eliminate gender inequalities at all levels, are essential for gender equality, the empowerment of women and poverty eradication and to allow women's full and equal contribution to, and equal opportunity to benefit from, development,

Recognizing that poverty eradication and the achievement and preservation of peace are mutually reinforcing, and recognizing also that peace is inextricably linked to equality between women and men and to development,

Aware that, while globalization and liberalization processes have created employment opportunities for women in many countries, they have also made some women, especially in developing countries and in particular in the least developed countries, more vulnerable to problems caused by increased economic volatility, including in the agricultural sector, and that special support, particularly for women who are small-scale farmers, and empowerment are necessary to enable them to take advantage of the opportunities of agricultural market liberalization,

Recognizing that enhanced trade opportunities for developing countries, including through trade liberalization, will improve the economic condition of those societies, including women, which is of particular importance in rural communities,

Expressing its concern that, while women represent an important and growing proportion of business owners, their contribution to economic and social development is constrained by, inter alia, the denial and lack of equal rights and lack of access of women to legal aid, education, training, information, support services and credit facilities and salaries, and control over land, capital, technology and other areas of production,

Also expressing its concern about the underrepresentation of women in political and economic decision-making, and stressing the importance of mainstreaming a gender perspective in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of all policies and programmes, including in conflict prevention and fragile situations and in post-conflict peacebuilding,

Noting the importance of the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, in particular its funds and programmes, and the specialized agencies in facilitating the advancement of women in development,

1. *Takes note* of the reports of the Secretary-General;[12]

2. *Calls upon* Member States, the United Nations system and other international and regional organizations, within their respective mandates, and all sectors of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, as well as all women and men, to fully commit themselves and to intensify their contributions to the implementation of the Beijing Declaration[2] and Platform for Action[3] and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly;[4]

3. *Recognizes* the mutually reinforcing links between gender equality and poverty eradication and the achievement of all of the Millennium Development Goals, as well as the need to elaborate and implement, where appropriate, in consultation with civil society, comprehensive gender-sensitive poverty eradication strategies that address social, structural and macroeconomic issues;

4. *Emphasizes* the need to link policies on economic and social development to ensure that all people, including those in poor and vulnerable groups, benefit from inclusive economic growth and development, in accordance with the goals of the Monterrey Consensus;[7]

5. *Urges* Member States, non-governmental organizations and the United Nations system to accelerate further efforts to increase the number of women in decision-making and to build their capacity as agents of change, and to empower women to participate actively and effectively in the development, implementation and evaluation of national development and/or poverty eradication policies, strategies and programmes, including, where appropriate, programme-based approaches;

6. *Stresses* the importance of the adoption by Member States, international organizations, including the United Nations, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, trade unions and other stakeholders of appropriate measures to identify and address the negative impacts of the economic and financial crisis on

[12] A/64/93 and A/64/162 and Corr.1.

women and girls and of maintaining adequate levels of funding for gender equality and the empowerment of women;

7. *Also stresses* the importance of the creation by Member States, international organizations, including the United Nations, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, trade unions and other stakeholders of a favourable and conducive national and international environment in all fields of life for the effective integration of women in development, and that they undertake and disseminate a gender analysis of policies and programmes related to macroeconomic stability, structural reform, taxation, investments, including foreign direct investment, and all relevant sectors of the economy;

8. *Urges* the donor community, Member States, international organizations, including the United Nations, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, trade unions and other stakeholders, to strengthen the focus and impact of development assistance targeting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls through gender mainstreaming, the funding of targeted activities and enhanced dialogue between donors and partners, and to strengthen mechanisms to effectively measure the resources allocated to incorporating gender perspectives in all areas of development assistance;

9. *Urges* Member States, non-governmental organizations and the United Nations system to accelerate further their efforts to increase the number of women in economic decision-making bodies, including at the highest levels in the relevant government ministries, international organizations, corporate boards and the banking sector, as well as to improve the collection, compilation, dissemination and use of data on women's participation in economic decision-making bodies;

10. *Urges* Member States to incorporate a gender perspective, commensurate with gender equality goals, into the design, implementation, monitoring and reporting of national development strategies, and to encourage the involvement of men and boys in the promotion of gender equality, and in this regard calls upon the United Nations system to support national efforts to develop methodologies and tools and to promote capacity-building and evaluation;

11. *Calls on* Member States to integrate a gender perspective into the design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and reporting of national environmental policies, and to strengthen mechanisms and provide adequate resources to ensure women's full and equal participation in decision-making at all levels on environmental issues, in particular on strategies related to the impact of climate change on the lives of women and girls;

12. *Encourages* Member States to ensure inclusive and more effective participation of national mechanisms for gender equality and women's empowerment in formulating national development strategies, including strategies aimed at eradicating poverty and reducing inequalities, and calls upon the United Nations system to support national efforts in this regard;

13. *Calls upon* Member States to continue to increase women's representation and participation in government decision-making at all levels in development policy areas in order to ensure that the priorities, needs and contributions of women are taken into consideration by, inter alia, providing access to training, developing measures to reconcile family and professional

responsibilities and eliminating gender stereotyping in appointments and promotions;

14. *Expresses deep concern* about the pervasiveness of violence against women and girls, reiterates the need to further intensify efforts to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls, and recognizes that violence against women and girls is one of the obstacles to the achievement of the objectives of equality, development and peace and that women's poverty and lack of political, social and economic empowerment, as well as their marginalization, may result from their exclusion from social policies and benefits for sustainable development and can place them at increased risk of violence;

15. *Recognizes* the need to strengthen the capacity of Governments to incorporate a gender perspective into policies and decision-making, and encourages all Governments, international organizations, including the United Nations system, and other relevant stakeholders to assist and support the efforts of developing countries in integrating a gender perspective into all aspects of policymaking, including through the provision of technical assistance and financial resources;

16. *Encourages* Governments, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and other actors of civil society to promote and protect the rights of women workers, to take action to remove structural and legal barriers as well as stereotypical attitudes to gender equality at work and to initiate positive steps to promote equal pay for equal work or work of equal value;

17. *Urges* Governments to develop and adequately resource active labour market policies on full and productive employment and decent work for all, including the full participation of women and men in both rural and urban areas;

18. *Calls on* Governments to strengthen efforts to protect the rights of, and ensure decent work conditions for, domestic workers, including migrant women, in relation to, inter alia, working hours, conditions and wages, access to health-care services and other social and economic benefits;

19. *Encourages* Member States to adopt and/or review and to fully implement gender-sensitive legislation and policies that reduce, through specifically targeted measures, horizontal and vertical occupational segregation and gender-based wage gaps;

20. *Urges* all Member States to undertake a gender analysis of national labour laws and standards and to establish gender-sensitive policies and guidelines for employment practices, including for transnational corporations, with particular attention to export-processing zones, building on multilateral instruments, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women[13] and conventions of the International Labour Organization;

21. *Also urges* all Member States to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women with regard to their access to financial services, including bank loans, bank accounts, mortgages and other forms of financial credit, giving special attention to poor, uneducated women, to support women's access to legal assistance and to encourage the financial sector to mainstream gender perspectives in their policies and programmes;

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[13] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.

22. *Recognizes* the role of microfinance, including microcredit, in the eradication of poverty, the empowerment of women and the generation of employment, notes in this regard the importance of sound national financial systems, and encourages the strengthening of existing and emerging microcredit institutions and their capacities, including through the support of international financial institutions;

23. *Urges* Governments to ensure that microfinance programmes focus on developing savings products that are safe, convenient and accessible to women in their efforts and support women to retain control over their savings;

24. *Urges* all Governments to eliminate discrimination of women in the field of education and ensure their equal access to all levels of education;

25. *Stresses* the importance of developing national strategies for the promotion of sustainable and productive entrepreneurial activities that will generate income among disadvantaged women and women living in poverty;

26. *Urges* Member States to encourage women entrepreneurs, including through education, vocational training and training of women in business, administration and information and communications technology, and invites business associations to assist national efforts in this regard;

27. *Encourages* Governments to create a climate that is conducive to increasing the number of women entrepreneurs and the size of their businesses by giving them greater access to financial instruments, providing training and advisory services, facilitating networking and information-sharing and increasing their participation in advisory boards and other forums to contribute to the formulation and review of policies and programmes being developed by financial institutions;

28. *Calls upon* Governments to promote, inter alia, through legislation and family-friendly and gender-sensitive work environments, the facilitation of breastfeeding for working mothers and the provision of the necessary care for working women's children and other dependants and to consider promoting policies and programmes, as appropriate, to enable men and women to reconcile their work, social and family responsibilities;

29. *Encourages* Member States to adopt and implement legislation and policies to promote the reconciliation of work and family responsibilities, including through increased flexibility in working arrangements such as part-time work, and to ensure that both women and men have access to maternity, paternity, parental and other forms of leave and are not discriminated against when availing themselves of such benefits;

30. *Urges* Member States to adopt and review legislation and policies to ensure women's equal access to and control over land, housing and other property, including through inheritance, land reform programmes and land markets, and to take measures to implement these laws and policies;

31. *Urges* Governments to take measures to facilitate equitable access to land and property rights by providing training to make the judicial, legislative and administrative system more responsive to gender equality issues, to provide legal aid for women seeking to claim their rights, to support the efforts of women's groups and networks and to carry out awareness campaigns to draw attention to equal rights for women to land and property;

32. *Recognizes* the need to empower women economically and politically, particularly poor women, and in this regard encourages Governments, with the support of their development partners, to invest in appropriate infrastructure and other projects, including the provision of water and sanitation to rural areas and urban slums to increase health and well-being, relieve the workloads of women and girls and release their time and energy for other productive activities, including entrepreneurship;

33. *Also recognizes* the role of agriculture in development, and stresses the importance of reviewing agricultural policies and strategies to ensure that women's critical role in food security is recognized and addressed as an integral part of both short- and long-term responses to the food crisis;

34. *Expresses its concern* at the overall expansion and feminization of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and the fact that women and girls bear a disproportionate share of the burden imposed by HIV/AIDS, that they are more easily infected, that they play a key role in care and that they have become more vulnerable to violence, stigma and discrimination, poverty and marginalization from their families and communities as a result of HIV/AIDS, and calls upon Governments and the international community to intensify efforts towards the goal of universal access to comprehensive HIV prevention programmes, treatment, care and support by 2010 and to have halted and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS by 2015;

35. *Reaffirms* the commitment to achieve universal access to reproductive health by 2015, as set out at the International Conference on Population and Development,[14] integrating this goal into strategies to attain the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration[5] aimed at reducing maternal mortality, improving maternal health, reducing child mortality, promoting gender equality, combating HIV/AIDS and eradicating poverty;

36. *Recognizes* that there is a need for all donors to maintain and deliver on their existing bilateral and multilateral official development assistance commitments and targets, and that the full implementation of these commitments will substantially boost resources available to push forward the international development agenda;

37. *Expresses deep concern* that maternal health remains one of the largest health inequities in the world, and over the uneven progress in improving child and maternal health, and in this context calls upon States to renew their commitment to prevent and eliminate child and maternal mortality and morbidity;

38. *Encourages* the international community, the United Nations system, the private sector and civil society to continue to provide the necessary financial resources to assist national Governments in their efforts to meet the development targets and benchmarks agreed upon at the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women, the International Conference on Population and Development, the Millennium Summit, the International Conference on Financing for Development, the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Second World Assembly on Ageing, the twenty-third and twenty-fourth special

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[14] See *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18).

sessions of the General Assembly and other relevant United Nations conferences and summits;

39. *Urges* multilateral donors, and invites international financial institutions, within their respective mandates, and regional development banks to review and implement policies to support national efforts to ensure that a higher proportion of resources reaches women, in particular in rural and remote areas;

40. *Stresses* the importance of collecting and exchanging all relevant information needed on the role of women in development, including data on international migration, as well as the need to develop statistics disaggregated by age and sex, and in that regard encourages developed countries and relevant entities of the United Nations to provide support and assistance to developing countries, upon their request, with respect to establishing, developing and strengthening their databases and information systems;

41. *Recognizes* the critical role and contribution of rural women, including indigenous women and their traditional knowledge, in enhancing agricultural and rural development, improving food security and eradicating rural poverty;

42. *Calls upon* all organizations of the United Nations system, within their organizational mandates, to mainstream a gender perspective and to pursue gender equality in their country programmes, planning instruments and sector-wide programmes and to articulate specific country-level goals and targets in this field in accordance with national development strategies;

43. *Calls upon* the organizations of the United Nations development system, within their organizational mandates, to further improve their institutional accountability mechanisms and to include intergovernmentally agreed gender equality results and gender-sensitive indicators in their strategic frameworks;

44. *Calls upon* the United Nations system to integrate gender mainstreaming into all its programmes and policies, including in the integrated follow-up to United Nations conferences, in accordance with agreed conclusions 1997/2 on gender mainstreaming adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1997;[15]

45. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session a report on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution, including on integrating a gender perspective into national development strategies;

46. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to update the World Survey on the Role of Women in Development[16] for consideration by the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session, noting that the survey should continue to focus on selective emerging development themes that have an impact on the role of women in the economy at the national, regional and international levels;

47. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-sixth session the sub-item entitled "Women in development".

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[15] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 3* and addendum (A/52/3/Rev.1 and Rev.1/Add.1), chap. IV, sect. A, para. 4.

[16] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.09.IV.7.